



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

March 4, 2009

Mr. Jeffrey Williams
Senior Environmental Engineer
Office of Occupation Health,
Environmental, and Safety Services
National Security Agency
Suite 6404
9800 Savage Road
Fort Meade, MD 27055

Re: Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Utilities Upgrade Project at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland (CEQ #20090029)

Dear Mr. Williams:

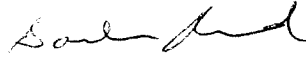
In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Proposed Utilities Upgrade Project on the National Security Agency (NSA) campus at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. EPA has determined that the Department of Defense (DOD) has addressed its comments within the FEIS.

However, EPA would like to reiterate and emphasize DOD's responsibility to protect environmental resources and avoid and/or minimize impacts to these valuable resources to the maximum extent practicable. Specific attention is directed to the forested areas on Sites 4 and 6 as well as wetlands when the final site selection and facility design is determined.

EPA appreciates DOD's commitment to preserve a minimum of 20 percent of the forested area which would be in accordance with Fort Meade's tree management policy and the Maryland Forest Conservation Act. EPA commends DOD in its attempt to limit impacts on forested areas, particularly the Forest Conservation Area, in the final project design as well as the intent to provide some reforestation to improve the adjacent pine scrub forest on Site 4. Although the extent of the forest restoration is not known at this time, EPA encourages DOD to make every effort to sufficiently mitigate for the proposed loss.

Thank you for providing EPA with the opportunity to review this project. If you need assistance in the future, the staff contact for this project is Karen DelGrosso; she can be reached at 215-814-2765.

Sincerely,



Barbara Rudnick,
NEPA Point-of-Contact
Office of Environmental Programs

